

Extensive explanation of the twenty-one Bodhicittas and their similes:

1. Earth-like Bodhicitta

Bodhicitta endowed with aspiration (on the small path of accumulation) is like the earth because just as the earth is the foundation for crops, trees, houses, etc. likewise *Bodhicitta endowed with aspiration* serves as the basis from which all subsequent realizations can grow and all higher paths are induced.

2. Gold-like Bodhicitta

Bodhicitta endowed with resolve (on the middling path of accumulation) is like refined gold because just as refined gold's nature does not transform even after being cut, rubbed and burned, likewise *Bodhicitta endowed with resolve* cannot degenerate anymore. In other words, once Bodhisattvas reach the middling path of accumulation and cultivate *gold-like Bodhicitta* their Bodhicitta (and their path of accumulation) cannot degenerate anymore.

3. Moon-like Bodhicitta

Bodhicitta endowed with exceptional resolve (on the great path of accumulation) is like the waxing moon because just as the new moon waxes until it is full likewise with *Bodhicitta endowed with exceptional resolve* Bodhisattva's Dharma qualities increase continuously. Those Dharma qualities are, for instance the four mindfulnesses and the remaining harmonies of the thirty-seven harmonies to enlightenment. The reason for such increase is that on the great path of accumulation Bodhisattvas cultivate a special meditative stabilization, called '*Concentration of Continuous Dharma*' which enables them to directly perceive the emanation bodies of Buddhas in distant places and receive teachings from them.

4. Fire-like Bodhicitta

Bodhicitta endowed with training in the similitude of the three knowers/wisdoms (on the path of preparation) is like fire because with *Bodhicitta endowed with training in the similitude of the three knowers/wisdoms* Bodhisattvas start to burn the firewood of obstructions to the three exalted knowers. Bodhisattvas reach the path of preparation when they cultivate the mind that is a union of calm abiding and special insight taking emptiness as its object. This mind which realizes emptiness conceptually is concomitant with the mental factor of concentration and the mental factor of wisdom. In this case the mental factor of concentration is 'calm abiding' because through prior training it is able to focus on its object emptiness for at least four hours. The mental factor of wisdom is 'special insight' because it realizes emptiness and is concomitant with 'calm abiding'.

Therefore, with the attainment of the union of calm abiding and special insight taking emptiness as its object conjoined with *Bodhicitta endowed with training in the similitude of the three knowers / wisdoms*, Bodhisattvas start to weaken the obstructions to omniscience and in this way the obstructions to the attainment of the three exalted knowers of a Buddha. The three exalted knowers are the 'knower of bases', 'the knower of paths', and the 'exalted knower of aspects' in the continuum of a Buddha.

Please note that Bodhicitta on the path of preparation is called *Bodhicitta endowed with training in the similitude of the three knowers/wisdoms* because Bodhisattvas on the path of preparation, who have not first become Hinayana Arhats before they entered the Mahayana paths, have only *similitudes* of the three knowers in their continua. They have only similitudes of the three knowers in their continua because they cultivate the first two of the three knowers -- the knower of bases and the knower of paths -- only once they reach the path of seeing or the first Bodhisattva bhumi. The last of the three knowers -- the exalted knower of aspects - - they only generate once they reach full enlightenment.

5. Treasure-like Bodhicitta

Bodhicitta endowed with generosity (on the first bhumi/ground) is like a great treasure because it satisfies

sentient beings through resources. Even though Bodhisattvas engage in the practice of the six or the ten perfections from the path of accumulation until the path of meditation, they emphasize the practice of the perfection of generosity on the first Bodhisattva bhumi/ground. Bodhisattvas reach the first bhumi/ground (and the path of seeing) once they realize emptiness directly. When they arise from the meditative absorption realizing emptiness directly, they engage particularly in the practice of the perfection of generosity. Therefore, on the first bhumi they obtain a special confidence in the practice of generosity, they are able to easily give away their body and are able to also place others in the practice of generosity.

6. Jewel mine-like Bodhicitta

Bodhicitta endowed with ethics (on the second bhumi/ground) is like a jewel mine because with *Bodhicitta endowed with ethics* Bodhisattvas obtain excellent qualities. Bodhisattvas on the second bhumi emphasize the practice of the perfection of ethics/morality. Due to the emphasis of controlling and purifying themselves Bodhisattvas on this bhumi become the source of many great qualities which are compared to a jewel mine providing great riches. Therefore, on the second bhumi Bodhisattvas obtain a special confidence in the practice of the perfection of ethics and are able to place others in the practice. It is said that they do not even have dreams about engaging in non-ethical conduct.

7. Ocean-like Bodhicitta

Bodhicitta endowed with patience (on the third bhumi) is like a great ocean because just as a great ocean is not disturbed by throwing objects into it likewise with *Bodhicitta endowed with patience* Bodhisattvas are not swayed and affected by disturbing factors such as aggression and suffering. Bodhisattvas on the third bhumi emphasize the practice of the perfection of patience. Therefore, they obtain a special confidence in the practice of the perfection of patience and are able to place others in the practice.

8. Vajra-like Bodhicitta

Bodhicitta endowed with joyous effort (on the fourth bhumi) is like a vajra because just as a vajra has the quality of indestructibility likewise with *Bodhicitta endowed with joyous effort* Bodhisattvas' resolve is indestructible. Bodhisattvas on the fourth bhumi emphasize the practice of the perfection of joyous effort/diligence/perseverance. Therefore, they do not become discouraged and depressed by whatever obstacles they encounter, they obtain a special confidence in the practice of the perfection of joyous effort and are able to place others in the practice.

9. Mountain-like Bodhicitta

Bodhicitta endowed with concentration (on the fifth bhumi) is like the king of mountains because just as the king of mountains possesses great solidity likewise with *Bodhicitta endowed with concentration* Bodhisattvas' mind are very firm and stable. Bodhisattvas on the fourth bhumi emphasize the practice of the perfection of concentration. Therefore, their minds remain unmoved by distracting objects; they obtain a special confidence in the practice of the perfection of joyous concentration and are able to place others in the practice.

10. Medicine-like Bodhicitta

Bodhicitta endowed with the perfection of wisdom (on the sixth bhumi) is like medicine because just as medicine pacifies illnesses likewise with *Bodhicitta endowed with the perfection of wisdom* Bodhisattvas are able to pacify the illness of the afflictive and cognitive obstructions. Bodhisattvas on the sixth bhumi emphasize the practice of the perfection of wisdom. Therefore, they are able to enter into and arise from the absorption of cessation within the shortest instant in which an action can be completed. Further, they obtain a special confidence in the practice of wisdom and are able to place others in the practice.

